

MILD WINTER SPAWNS EARLY CRICKETS HATCH

Millard County -- Utah's late winter thaw has contributed to an earlier than normal hatch of thousands of Mormon crickets near the central Utah town of Kanosh, in Millard County. The discovery of the crickets comes seven to ten days earlier than usual, and signals the arrival of what's expected to be the state's sixth year in a row of severe cricket and grasshopper infestation.

"The combination of a mild winter and warm temperatures has contributed to an early hatch of the insects this year," said Dick Wilson, plant industry director. "Regrettably we've been anticipating this, and will now begin an accelerated baiting program to attempt to control the infestation," he added.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF), along with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS), estimate the 2003 Mormon cricket and grasshopper infestation in Utah will cover between five to six million acres--nearly double the area of last year's outbreak. The UDAF will again offer a 50-50 cost sharing program to help private agricultural land owners combat the insects. As in the past, the UDAF will pay half the costs of obtaining and applying insect control bait around private property. The USDA/APHIS will conduct control efforts from both the ground and the air.

Recently, the Utah Legislature appropriated \$280,000 to the UDAF for cricket and grasshopper control on state and private lands. The first scheduled control measures are expected to come in early April.

Landowners are encouraged to contact the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food at (801) 538-7123 to report crickets that hatched. The public is also encouraged to contact their local county USU extension office for information on how to combat crickets or grasshoppers around their property. Residential property owners who traditionally experience cricket and grasshopper infestations are encouraged to work together in a coordinated effort to combat the insects.

For more information about Utah's Mormon crickets and grasshopper visit: www.ag.utah.gov/

Water Quality Outreach Video-tape And Instructional Manual Ready For Release

After nearly three years of research and behind-the-scenes work, the Outreach Workgroup of the national State-EPA Nonpoint Source (NPS) initiative is ready to release the first phase of the NPS Outreach Toolbox. The outreach toolbox is designed to help local watershed groups, municipalities, soil conservation districts, rural water companies, and others develop and implement their own successful watershed water quality outreach campaigns.

The first phase of the toolbox, due out by June, is a teaching guide and companion video. Getting in Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns, contains more than 90 pages of instruction, examples and interactive work sheets that take groups through a six-step process of developing and implementing an outreach campaign.

The six-step process includes: 1. Driving Forces, Goals and Objectives, 2. Target Audiences, 3. Messages, 4. Formats, 5. Distribution, 6. Evaluation,

The companion video includes a short overview of the steps followed by four case studies from around the country that show the steps in use. Eventually the guidebook will also be available on the EPA web page, www.epa.gov/owow/nps/outreach.html.



One of the many video images presented in the video-tape titled, "Getting in Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns." Marketing and Conservation's Jack Wilbur created the video that helps communities promote their water quality projects.

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UDAF Volunteers Celebrate National AG. Day At Backman Ele.

Salt Lake City -- Students at Backman Elementary School in Salt Lake City celebrated Agriculture Day, Friday, March 21st by enjoying a Utah-Ag. products lunch and hearing about the importance of agriculture in their lives. The lunch was hosted by several Utah Department of Agriculture and Food's Ag. In The Classroom volunteers. The lunch featured Utah-grown apples, supplied by Mountainland Apples of Santaquin; shelf-stable milk, produced by Gossner Foods of Logan; cookies from Cookiecreek Bakery of Murray; and individual pizzas from Shepherd's Foods of Spanish Fork, Utah. The cookies and pizza were made from Utah wheat. The donated food items fed about 100 students.

The 30th National Agriculture Day celebrated the abundance of high-quality low-cost food that is produced by America's farmers and ranchers. American agriculture is responsible for providing the necessities of everyday life...food, fiber and clothing.

National Ag Day is committed to increasing public awareness about American agriculture. As the world population soars, there is even greater demand for the food and fiber that the United States produces.

Utah agriculture generates about 100,000 jobs and \$4 billion in economic stimulation to the state's economy. The state's top ten agricultural products are: Cattle, dairy, hay, hogs, nursery products, chicken eggs, vegetables, milk, wheat, and fruit.



UDAF's Kristie Wernli tells students about the importance of agriculture during National Agriculture Day.

USDA MAKES HUMANITARIAN FOOD AVAILABLE FOR CITIZENS OF IRAQ

WASHINGTON, March 20, 2003 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture authorized the availability of urgent humanitarian food supplies for the people of Iraq.

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman and Agency for International Development Administrator Andrew S. Natsios announced the immediate release of 200,000 metric tons of wheat from the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust, with another 400,000 tons to be made available as needed. A portion of the wheat from the reserve will be exchanged for rice, so that a combination of commodities will be available to feed the people of Iraq.

"President Bush has assured the people of Iraq that they will have the food and medicine they need," Veneman said. "Today's action is part of a closely coordinated U.S. effort to prepare for the humanitarian consequences of conflict and to ensure that the Iraqi people have the help they need to attain freedom and prosperity in a liberated nation."

"The United States is committed to ensuring that there is minimal disruption to the Iraqi food distribution system. Today's donation will go a long way to ensuring that the people of Iraq continue to have access to food," said Natsios.

The first shipment of wheat is expected to begin moving this week, and more wheat and rice will follow over the next several weeks. Another 400,000 tons will be available and shipped as needed. The commodities will be provided through P.L. 480, Title II, the U.S. government's major humanitarian food aid program administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development, which has prepositioned water, blankets, shelters, medical kits and other relief supplies to help the people of Iraq.

The United States is working in close partnership with international institutions and other nations as well as private voluntary organizations to ensure the rapid delivery of humanitarian relief for Iraq.

The Emerson Trust is an emergency reserve administered under the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture.

Utah Legislative Summary

The following is a list of the more prominent agriculture-related legislation that was proposed or passed during the latest legislative session.

HB 0017 Agricultural Products Dealer's Act Amendments. Modifies the Agricultural Products Dealer's Act by increasing the floor and ceiling on the amount of the surety bond or other security agreement required before a license is issued to a dealer. PASSED

HB 0018 Dealers in Agricultural Products. Modifies the Agricultural Product Dealer's Act by requiring the issuance of a Product of Agriculture Receipt to a producer by a dealer who receives a product of agriculture for sale, storage or consignment. PASSED

HB 0130 Damage on Private Land by Big Game Animals. Modifies the Wildlife Resources Code to amend provisions relating to big game animal damage to cultivated crops, forage, fences, or irrigation equipment on private land. PASSED

HB 0157 Control of Wolf Population. Modifies the Wildlife Resources Code to allow wolves to be transplanted if certain conditions are met. PASSED

HB 0192 Oversight of Utah Climate Center by Utah State University. Modifies the State System of Higher Education Code by transferring responsibility for the Utah Climate Center from the Department of Agriculture and Food to Utah State University. PASSED

HB 0305 Individual Income Tax Contribution Wolf Depredation and Management Restricted Account Modifies provisions relating to the Division of Wildlife Resources and Wildlife Board and the Individual Income Tax Act to provide an individual income tax contribution for wolf depredation and management. PASSED

SB 0123 Inherent Risk of Livestock Activities. Act adds livestock activities and professionals to the provisions of Title 78 providing limitations on the liability of equine activities and professionals. PASSED

SB 0142 Agricultural Cooperatives Amendments Modifies the Agricultural Cooperative Associations Act to provide for one-member associations and allows for proportionate voting in cooperative associations based on patronage. PASSED